

Report on Research Activity Panel (RAP) Activities for the MBNMS Newsletter

Gregor M. Cailliet, MLML, RAP Chair

and

Andrew DeVogelaere, MBNMS, Research Coordinator

Research Activity Panel (RAP):

The RAP has met at four different institutions, receiving updates on activities involving research at the Sanctuary, Monterey Bay Aquarium, UCSC's Institute of Marine Science, and Naval Postgraduate School.

MBNMS Ecosystem Monitoring Program

A comprehensive monitoring program is being developed for the ecosystems described in the 1998 MBNMS Annual Report. A Research Fellow is being hired (under MBARI support) to help the RAP survey and evaluate existing monitoring efforts and identify needs. MBCORC and the RAP are working to combine the Sanctuary GIS with an information transfer system and ocean health plan to communicate monitoring program results.

Kelp Forest Dynamics

The RAP endorsed a study of seasonal and annual kelp canopy dynamics over past decades from aerial photographs documenting the range of conditions that have occurred.

Sanctuary Currents

The 1999 Sanctuary Currents focused on long-term climate change and marine ecosystems, with Dr. Joseph Connell, UCSB, presenting the Ricketts Memorial Lecture on his long-term coral reef study results. The 1999 research award went to Dr. H. Gary Greene, MLML.

Rockfish Ecology

The RAP participated in the West Coast Rockfish Forum, a solution-based, multidisciplinary workshop on aspects of rockfish life history and fisheries, co-hosted by MBA and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council. The RAP has been working with the California Department of Fish and Game to identify studies that will evaluate the livefish fishery in the Sanctuary.

Dredging and Ecological Risks in MBNMS Harbors

A workshop in January addressed issues influencing dredging projects in Moss Landing Harbor. We are attempting to clarify ecological criteria influencing dredging.